

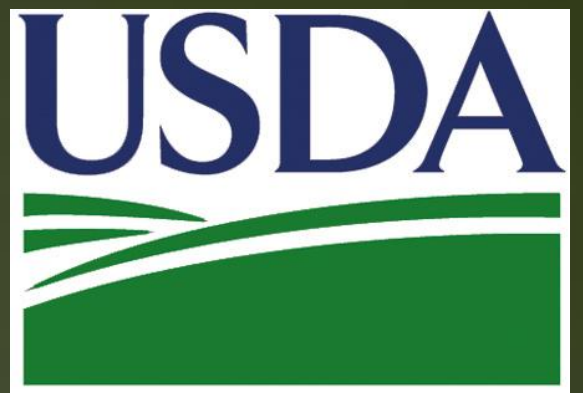
Focusing Recruitment, Retention and Research Experiences (FRRRE) of Underrepresented Minorities in Natural Resources Management



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FIRST QUARTER PROGRESS REPORT

PROJECT GOALS

- Increase enrollment of underrepresented minorities in agricultural and forestry related disciplines;
- Build a supportive learning environment that monitors and guides students' progress to succeed academically and offers them opportunities for networking and mentorship; and
- Enhance the scholarship of learning by giving students first-hand experiences across the region to study and offer potential solutions related to agriculture and forestry.



These goals will be achieved through the coordinated *Recruitment*, *Retention*, and *Research* activities at New Mexico Highlands University.

- **RECRUIT** talented high school, community college, undergraduate, and graduate students into degree programs related to natural resources management, including forestry, environmental geology, and watershed management;
- **RETAIN** students in these degree programs with a highly engaging and supportive learning environment; and
- **Partner** with local natural resource management agencies and develop highly engaging **RESEARCH** experiences that support increased economic opportunities and improved quality of life in rural America and protect and enhance the nation's natural resource base and environment.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Various extension activities will be coordinated for the Natural Resources Management students to cultivate student interest and awareness in natural resource management studies, retain students in these disciplines, and increase the number of students advancing to natural resources management careers. These include:

- Career workshops and study skill seminars.
- Regular research colloquia.
- Tutors and peer mentors.
- Forestry and Environmental Geology faculty mentoring.
- Financial aid counseling, course advisement, and career placement services.
- Semester and summer internships with various natural resources management agencies.



PROJECT ACTIVITIES TO DATE

- Hired support personnel (Ms. I. Mabel Suarez, Project Coordinator and Ms. Monique Esquibel, Project Secretary).
- Developed partnerships with variety of natural resources management agencies to provide internship opportunities for students.
- Outlined job descriptions and internship expectations with cooperating agencies.
- Developed internship eligibility requirements and application materials.
- Announced internship opportunities and solicited applications (due date December 4th, 2009 for Spring 2010 placement).
- Developed \$50,000 scholarship eligibility requirements and application materials.
- Announced scholarship opportunity and solicited applications (due date December 4th, 2009).
- Developed tentative schedule of events for Spring 2010, including field trips, guest seminars, and college success skill workshops.



NMHU - USDA INTERNSHIP JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

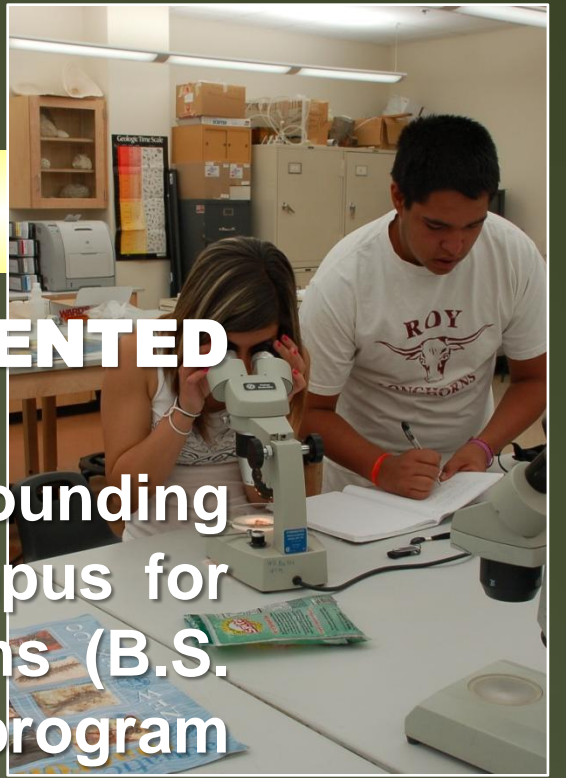


COOPERATING AGENCIES and ORGANIZATIONS

- U.S. Forest Service
- New Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute
- New Mexico State Forestry
- Tierra Y Montes Soil and Water Conservation District
- Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge
- New Mexico Acequia Association
- New Mexico State Engineers Office
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- New Mexico Tech
- NMHU ARMAS in Education Center
- NMHU Career Services Office
- NMHU Student Support Services

NIFA/USDA RELEVANT PRIORITY OR MISSION AREA

- **RECRUITMENT and RETENTION of UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS.**
FRRRE will recruit talented students twice annually from surrounding high schools, transferring community colleges, and on-campus for the Natural Resources Management undergraduate programs (B.S. Forestry and B.S. Environmental Geology) and the graduate program (M.S. Life Science/Natural Resources Management) programs.



STUDENT EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING.

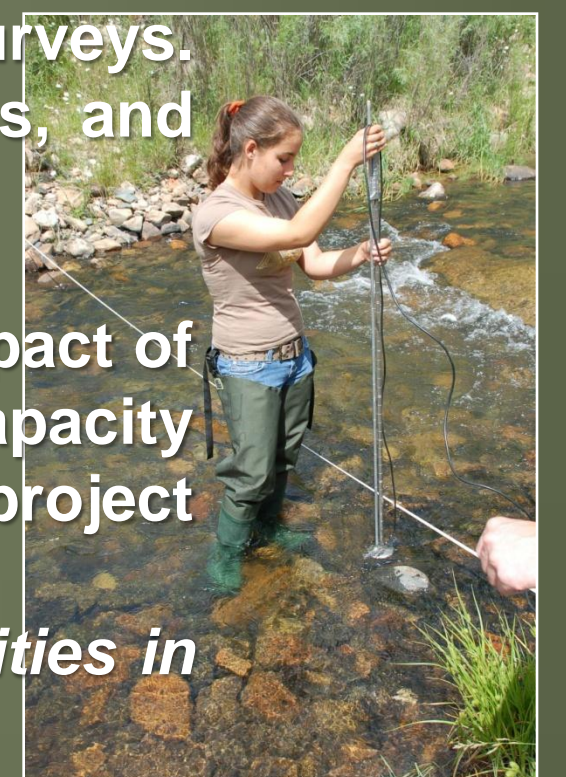
Participating students will further their scientific, technological and professional competencies outside the classroom by investigating and analyzing natural resources management problems and offering solutions through field-based research and on-site investigations. Working collaboratively with community citizens and professionals in farming, ranching, resource management, and forestry, students' will advance their decision making and communication skills under real-life work situations.

EVALUATION and EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- FRRREs' products, results and measurable outcomes will be determined by an independent evaluator who will use both qualitative and quantitative *data collection methods* to:

- Examine the availability, appropriateness; and timeliness of the activities;
- Determine completion and quality of products; and
- Determine impact of the project participating students.

- Data will be collected through faculty, students, staff and partner interviews, document checklists, and student and faculty surveys. *Data analysis* will include narrative descriptions, observations, and trend analysis.



- A Time-Series Analyses design will be used to measure the impact of the FRRRE activities on New Mexico Highlands University's capacity to serve the intended students and measure the intended project outcomes:
 - By 2012, increase the enrollment of underrepresented minorities in forestry and geology by 12 %.
 - By 2012, 80% of project students will pass "gatekeeper" courses with a C+ or higher.
 - By 2012, increase the graduation rate of underrepresented students in agriculture and forestry related undergraduate and graduate programs by 100%.
 - By 2012, 100% of project students will secure professional employment in Natural Resources Management fields or graduate school admission to Natural Resources Management programs.

BENEFICIARIES

- Over 50 students are currently majoring in Forestry and Environmental Geology of at New Mexico Highlands University and will benefit from FRRRE activities. Over 60% of these students are of Hispanic ethnicity.

- NMHU is the only university in New Mexico that offers a Bachelor of Science degree in: (1) Forestry with concentrations in Forestry and Wildland Fires, and (2) Environmental Geology. Furthermore, over 94% of NMHU students come from within the state of New Mexico and the majority (75%) are from the surrounding rural/small town counties of San Miguel, Mora, Rio Arriba, Taos, Colfax, Guadalupe, San Juan, McKinley, and Valencia. These are some of the poorest counties in the State and the nation (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009).

